

DRAFT

Meeting Minutes, August 17, 2006

Committee for Citizen Involvement

CCI Members Present: Mitch Brown, Basil Christopher, Bev Froude, Bill Scheiderich, Stacie Yost

CCI Members Absent: Sue Carver, Brian Kelly, Rick Parker

Staff Present: Liz, Newton, Duane Roberts

1. Welcome and Introductions

Committee Chair, Basil Christopher, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Basil asked committee members to forward any July minute emendations directly to Duane after the meeting. [None received.]

3. Neighborhood Program (Continued from July Meeting)

Liz introduced this item, which was a continuation of the July open house on the organization and structure of the Neighborhood Program. She shared the results of her research on the neighborhood programs of various cities located throughout the nation and distributed printouts of four neighborhood program web homepages. She then handed out copies of a "Responsibilities Worksheet" that referenced the following topical areas:

- Neighborhood level input into the Capital Investment Program, or CIP; participation in Neighborhood Watch
- Participation in Land Use Neighborhood Meetings
- Maintenance of neighborhood web site
- Participation in Community Emergency Response Training, or CERT, Program
- Facilitate solutions to neighborhood issues
- Organize neighborhood clean-up
- Formal neighborhood level input into City's comprehensive plan
- Representation on the CCI
- Community liaison to local schools
- Facilitate community building (National Night Out)
- Neighborhood communication (Community Connector)

Liz next led a discussion on each responsibility area.

CIP Program:

Liz asked how neighborhood CIP decisions could be made so that everyone in the neighborhood would have an opportunity to make recommendations and participate in reaching a consensus. She suggested that this could be accomplished through a forum other than a face to face meeting.

Basil commented that as a neighborhood resident he has not been aware of the appropriate process for making CIP suggestions. As an example, he was unsure whether the use of a special form was needed in order to submit a recommendation.

Liz asked how people come together. Basil commented that information should be shared ahead of time, i.e. well before the decision making takes place, but he is unsure of how all this should be arranged. Stacie stated that CIP project nominations could be made by phone, at a meeting, or in various other ways. Information on the nominations should be readily available to other residents. A voting procedure also is needed. Basil added that there should be an opportunity to meet with engineering staff in order to receive technical advice on potential project nominations.

Liz pointed out that under the present nomination process the community reacts to a recommended staff project list. A more neighborhood-friendly approach could include a front-end opportunity for citizens to provide input.

Bill commented that an important role of staff would be to identify so-called hidden infrastructure needs, such as a need for underground water lines.

Liz alluded to plans to provide an internet page for every issue or topic, including CIP nominations, when the neighborhood webpage is set up. Bill commented that a targeted mailing to neighborhood residents, with a prepaid return envelope included, is another way to solicit input. Together, internet postings and postal mailings would provide the most complete coverage.

Liz noted that one opportunity for neighborhood residents to convene could include combining a CIP meeting with a "back-to-school" or some other scheduled event. A stand alone CIP meeting would be less of a draw.

Neighborhood Watch

Liz noted that this is already an established program. She pointed out that the new neighborhood website will include up-to-date or live site-specific crime statistics. She indicated that Neighborhood Watch does not work well if no residents are home during the day. In lieu of meetings, articles in the City newsletter, or on the website, would serve the purpose of keeping neighborhood residents informed and involved.

She anticipates that a certain minimum level participation in Neighborhood Watch would be necessary in order for a group to qualify for the neighborhood grant.

Beverly asked for examples of successful Watch programs. Basil wondered if there could be active and passive Neighborhood Watch Programs. Important in the case of both types is that people need to know what to look for. Liz responded that the successful functioning of a Neighborhood Watch group wouldn't require meetings. The website could provide neighborhood-specific crime information, including information on what to look out for.

Land Use Meeting

Liz mentioned that land use meeting notices could be posted on a website to inform an affected neighborhood of a proposed development and allow neighbors an opportunity to weigh in electronically on its concerns. Providing an opportunity for a neighborhood representative to speak to Council is another idea. According to Liz, a so-called Neighborhood Land Use Coordinator could be allowed to speak on behalf of the neighborhood at a formal land use hearing.

Bev asked how people would be notified of land use proposals. Liz explained that the method could include website and/or individual postal notices.

Liz went on to discuss the idea of revising the currently used neighborhood meeting (land use) notice to tie information on development to an opportunity for the neighborhood to weigh-in on its concerns about the development. Expanding the notice area and allowing a neighborhood representative an opportunity to elaborate on neighborhood concerns at the land use hearing are the two main proposals related to neighborhood group involvement.

Neighborhood Communications

Liz explained that the City would be willing pay for individual neighborhood websites. The City would set guidelines and provide most of the content. A local webmaster would be needed for neighborhood-level information, which could include information on garage sales, and so on. No meetings would be needed for maintaining the website.

Bill commented that formatting and maintaining a website is a lot of work. Liz responded that only a small section of the website would need to look different from the City-formatted site. Rosters might need to be updated and some of the content might be local. A lot of the content would be City-fed and bylaws and mission statements wouldn't change over time. She noted that the webmaster role might appeal to a student.

CERT

Liz stated that another program that could be made available is the CERT program. CERT, or Community Emergency Response Team, is the City's emergency management program. A few citizens in each neighborhood could be CERT trained. No action by the neighborhood association would be needed for the neighborhood to receive the benefit of the program.

Facilitate Solutions to Neighborhood Issues

Liz indicated that for the past few years Tigard has provided neighborhood mediation service through a contract with the Beaverton Dispute Resolution Center. Participation in the program, which deals with disputes between neighbors, is voluntary and free. She went on to note that three years worth of Community Assessment Team, or staff neighborhood walk, data has been collected on neighborhood-specific code, infrastructure, and related problems and needs. All this data is available on the City webpage.

Bill commented that for action purposes, it would be useful for neighborhoods to rank the problems identified by the City Assessment Team. Otherwise, the raw data is "shotgun information" and difficult to act on. Liz replied that at the neighborhood level, the City's role is to raise issues and to let the neighborhood identify the solution. Bill stated that he understood this to mean that the City gives the idea, while citizens take the lead. The City's role is to kick off, initiate, or put another way, to provide information on options.

Basil commented that the program should not lead to the neighborhood "ganging up" on a neighbor. Liz added that the Mediation Program is complaint driven. Its aim is to deal with problems on a neighborhood level. Basil stated that neighborhood crime and other information needs to be fresh in order to engage people. Bill suggested the scanning-in of the full text of police crime reports. He, for one, would like to have more in-depth information from time to time about particular incidents. Basil asked about the appropriate action to take to report barking dogs.

Liz concluded this discussion by saying that in the case of this Neighborhood Issues topic, or focus area, she sees a need for a neighborhood meeting on how the program can be responsive to neighborhood problems. This is an example of convening around a bigger neighborhood issue.

Neighborhood Beautification and/or Clean Up

Liz indicated that a neighborhood group could choose to do a clean-up as its once-a-year activity under the Neighborhood Program. She asked the group for recommendations on how the decision for selecting a neighborhood activity or activities could be made.

Bill suggested publicizing available resources and providing a sign-up list, with a certain minimum number of sign-ups required, to go forward with an activity. Liz

added that activity and sign-up materials could be included in packets given to all new residents of a neighborhood.

Basil commented on the need for a coordinated effort to take care of a neighborhood issue or problem. Examples of coordinated efforts are painting fire hydrants, trash clean-up, and tree planting. Stacie commented on the need for a nomination process. Liz discussed the identification of a neighborhood tie-in as a condition for using City resources to program an activity.

Comprehensive Plan Input

Liz pointed out that the comprehensive plan revision process now underway is staff-driven. The CCI and neighborhoods can recommend comprehensive plan-related outreach activities, but staff is taking the lead role in working on the comprehensive plan itself. Bev expressed that the work program should start with an educational process, including outreach to individual persons. Outreach needs to be personalized.

Liz asked the group how best to get out the word, as it were, about the update process. Basil reframed this question as “How will residents know when to weigh in on the comprehensive plan? What are the opportunities to foster weigh-in?”

Bev mentioned that a neighborhood sign would be useful as a communication tool. Others spoke in support of a library reader board.

Representative on CCI

Liz stated that to facilitate effective communication with the City, Neighborhood groups would be allowed to appoint a neighborhood representative on the CCI.

Local Schools

Liz noted that participation in the Parent School Organizations could be another activity of potential interest to the neighborhood organizations. As one example of how this might work, the school script fund raising program, where schools benefit from people using script to shop at particular stores, could be expanded to include neighborhood participation.

Community Building

According to Liz, an example of community building could be the City giving the neighborhood the funding needed to finance a neighborhood-wide activity, such as a barbecue.

Neighborhood Communication

Liz noted that as one way to facilitate neighborhood communication, the Community Connector newsletter program could be shifted to a website platform. At the same time, the Community Connector’s role could be expanded into that of a community liaison for the neighborhood organization. The expanded role could include letting the City know when an issue or problem in the neighborhood arises. The connector also could connect with the schools. Importantly, the expanded role could include determining when to convene a meeting of the neighborhood. Meetings would be scheduled as needed, as opposed to monthly, which usually doesn’t work because not enough is going on.

A critical question is whether a board is necessary. Liz said that in her view a board is not needed. However, the City would be open to the idea, if desired by a particular neighborhood group. A drawback of having a board is that it may be difficult to recruit enough people to serve on it. Ad hoc meetings would provide the opportunity to convene without relying on a board.

7. Other Business/Announcements/Next Agenda

Liz indicated that she would like to return to the CCI once more before going to Council in October to present her recommendations regarding the content of the Neighborhood Program.

Next agenda suggestions include:

- Wrapping up the Neighborhood Program discussion
- Inviting Jim Wolf to discuss the Police Department's plans for National Night Out
- Planning for a Council-authorized community drug awareness open house
- Inviting Bob Roth, the City Volunteer Coordinator, to discuss "How to volunteer in your neighborhood."

The group decided that the September meeting would be re-scheduled to September 28th, (the fourth Thursday) from the normal third Thursday of the month in order to accommodate Liz's vacation schedule. The agenda will include a concluding discussion of the Neighborhood Program, a presentation on National Night Out as well as a discussion of a proposed Drug Awareness Open House. (*Note: Jim Wolf and Sheryl Huiras of the Police Department have been booked for the 9/28 meeting.*)

Basil adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM.